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NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112 *(continued)*

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/48/L.12)

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the first speaker in the debate for this meeting, the representative of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. HEINE (Marshall Islands): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of those members of the South Pacific Forum that are also Members of the United Nations, namely, Australia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

At the Summit Meeting of the Security Council held last year leaders of many of the world's largest and most powerful nations declared that international drug trafficking represented one of the most serious non-military threats to international security. They placed the problem in the same category as the grave threat of poverty. Unlike poverty, however, the problem of drug trafficking is not concentrated in either developed or developing countries but impacts on all nations of the global community. It is essential, therefore, that nations work together for solutions.

The experience of the Pacific area reflects the global nature of the international drug trafficking problem. Although we in the Pacific islands have been spared the most dramatic images resulting from trafficking in illicit narcotics such as crack houses, coca fields and narco-terrorism, the sad reality is that we are neither immune to nor isolated from this scourge. Today large quantities of illicit narcotics find their way even to our most remote islands. Tragically, our youth are being introduced to substances about which they have little information. Often they are not aware of the potentially deadly effects of these narcotics.

A number of our nations are composed of many small islands spread over vast areas of ocean. Some, such as the Federated States of Micronesia, span an area almost as large as the continental United States. These geographic features, combined with the growing importance of the Pacific region as a shipping lane between Asia and the West present an attractive avenue for international drug traffickers.

Naturally, the Governments of our region are committed to stopping all illicit drug shipments from ever reaching our shores. However, our region's limited financial, technological and human resources hamper our ability to deal with this problem. Notwithstanding the will of our Governments, we suspect that these limitations have often resulted in shipments passing through the region undetected.

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Our Governments commend the successes enjoyed in other regions of the world in the effort to address the problem. We have observed nations with highly advanced technologies and sound economies taking direct measures - with some success - to eradicate the trade in illicit narcotics and its associated activities, such as money laundering. Ironically, successes in other regions may have a negative effect on the Pacific islands, as effective measures elsewhere cause drug traffickers to look for new fields of operation. To these international criminals the Pacific region, with its resource limitations, represents fertile ground for their grim trade.

It is essential that our nations ensure an effective exchange of information, both within the region and intraregionally. Increased technical and financial assistance to improve monitoring and interdiction in the small island countries of the Pacific is especially needed.

Although the problem of drug consumption in the Pacific has not reached the extreme that it has elsewhere, it threatens to do so in the future.

Domestic drug-abuse problems are increasing in our societies as illicit drugs become more widely available. Education is the key to preventing this menace from devastating Pacific island societies. Drug traffickers often prey on an ignorance of the consequences of drug use. Because of the historic isolation of Pacific islanders from the problem, the level of drug abuse education today is struggling to keep up with the rapid pace of the threat from illicit narcotics. With the help of the international community, effective programmes to raise awareness of the dangers of drug abuse can be incorporated into formal education curricula at all levels.

Our region has a well-developed framework that has been utilized in the fight against illicit narcotic trafficking, the laundering of funds generated by these activities, and in the area of mutual judicial assistance generally. Specialist bodies under the South Pacific Forum, such as the Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting (PILOM), the South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC), and the Customs Heads of Administration Regional Meeting (CHARM) are all working in the field. The South Pacific Commission is also making a growing impact on the areas of demand reduction and prevention via its health and education programmes. All these institutions have the capacity to deliver additional, well-targeted and culturally relevant drug-control programmes to the island States of the South Pacific if additional resources can be made available to them.

In this context, we have noted with appreciation the report of the UNDCP mission to the Pacific in November and December 1992. The report's conclusions, which recommend some specifically targeted programmes for the most seriously affected countries, as well as use of the existing regional infrastructure to deliver some region-based programmes in the areas of demand reduction and prevention and of interdiction and law enforcement, strike us as appropriate and timely.

We welcome the decision of the UNDCP to implement some of the conclusions, and we would encourage the Programme to continue implementation of the additional recommendations as resources permit.

Clearly, all nations - large and small - have a direct interest in combating drug trafficking. International agencies play an essential role in assisting nations in their efforts. We welcome the heightened attention being given by the United Nations to drug-control activities, and we commend the work of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. We welcome all initiatives aimed at increasing coordination between United Nations agencies, and we look forward to the report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on the consolidation of United Nations drug-control activities. This report is to be submitted to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in 1995.

The allocation of these plenary meetings of the General Assembly for a high-level discussion of the topic makes possible a continued and fruitful exchange of views. We fully endorse this year's General Assembly draft resolution on measures to strengthen international cooperation in drug control, and we look forward to its adoption by consensus.

Finally, our Governments pledge their continued commitment to full cooperation with members of the international community to combat the problem of international drug trafficking and associated activities. We call on all States to join us in abiding by commitments and in acting responsibly on this issue.

The PRESIDENT: I now call the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. KHOSHROO (Islamic Republic of Iran): As it approaches the fourth year of its Decade against Drug Abuse, the United Nations, which is the forum best suited to the purpose, has convened to examine the status of international cooperation in this field. The success of the

various responses to the challenges posed by the widespread drug menace will depend primarily on States' political will, which is the vital element of this sacred struggle.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that drug abuse has become one of the world's most serious and widespread problems, threatening the human race and destroying economic and social organizations steadily and at an ever-increasing pace.

In view of the increase in the volume and misuse of narcotics in various countries, on the one hand, and of the advanced weaponry and the sophisticated distribution and smuggling networks among narcotics dealers, on the other hand, international instruments, such as anti-drug conventions - especially the Convention of 1988 - must be given serious priority by States. It is particularly important to emphasize the need for full application of paragraph 6 of article 3 of that Convention in order to deter drug-related offenses.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a party to the 1961 and 1988 Conventions, continues to take all possible steps, at the national, regional and international levels, to promote and implement the recommendations of the Global Programme of Action. We believe that the adverse consequences of the illicit production and sale of, demand for, traffic in and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances threaten the lives of millions equally in the developing and in the developed countries. To prevent and limit the destabilizing effects of drug misuse, we must pay special attention to the areas known as the Golden Crescent and the Golden Triangle, as well as to the Latin American and Caribbean regions.

South-West Asia is one of the world's leading areas of narcotics production. Owing to its geographical location and - more important - to political developments there in recent years, this is a highly sensitive region. With an annual output of 3,000 to 3,500 tons, South-West Asia is a major producer and supplier of drugs at the international level. A considerable percentage of this output is smuggled into the Islamic Republic of Iran, from which it is transported to European markets.

Poppy cultivation and drug production were permanently eradicated in the first year following victory in Iran's Islamic revolution, and there is now no drug cultivation or production of any kind in the country. However, Iran is located on a major drug-smuggling route. In view of the special, determining conditions in the region, as well as the extensive efforts at the national level, many sessions and exercises in bilateral and multilateral cooperation involving various countries of the region, for the purpose of securing effective measures to resolve problems relating to drugs, have been held in Tehran.

Among the most significant sessions, the following are worth highlighting: the twenty-eighth session of the Subcommittee on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East, in July 1991; the ministerial-level Conference at the twenty-ninth session of that Subcommittee, in October 1992; the meeting of the Group of Experts of the Eighth Committee of the Economic Cooperation Organization, in April 1992. In addition, a meeting of heads of national drug-law-enforcement agencies in Central Asia and the Middle East is scheduled to be held in Tehran next April.

Following the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan, another memorandum of understanding - between Iran, Pakistan and UNDCP - will be finalized soon.

Representatives of several countries and international organizations have observed the operations and witnessed the measures undertaken by the Islamic Republic of Iran in its battle against drugs in recent years. Almost all these groups have praised such plans and measures. The UNDCP group visited the eastern border of the Islamic Republic of Iran in July 1991 and, following a thorough inspection, filed a report, from which I should like to quote one paragraph:

> "Based on its observations, the Mission would venture to estimate that, as a developing country, Iran is very close to, if not at, the top, in terms of per capita investment in anti-narcotic efforts."

In spite of the continuing demands of its first and second five-year socio-economic programmes, the Islamic Republic of Iran has embarked on a very costly campaign to block the drug flow by initiating rigorous security countermeasures along its borders. Although we are fully aware of the fact that the final destination of the drugs is Europe, we continue to make every effort to fulfil our moral and political commitment to the international community. The fact is that the vital issue of controlling the influx of drugs into Iran is a common responsibility and, as such, must be shared by all countries and bodies concerned.

As this distinguished gathering addresses the issue of international cooperation against drug abuse, I must

regretfully point out that Iran's current countermeasures to curtail the inflow of drugs into and through Iranian territory to Europe - measures requiring considerable financial investment - have been a one-sided effort, in that Iran has not had the practical cooperation of other countries or of the relevant international agencies. In view of Iran's present economic situation, I must indicate explicitly that, in the absence of adequate technical and financial assistance for Iran and its neighbours, continuation of those costly measures would create serious problems.

The comprehensive implementation of anti-drug measures such as the Global Programme of Action (GPA) and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) necessitates in-depth analysis, updated priorities and a long-term pragmatic approach. In order to achieve practical results, it is particularly necessary to deal equally at the regional and country levels. Thus, the review of the implementation of the GPA and SWAP, as well as the consideration and evaluation of recommendations and activities presented in documents A/48/286 and A/48/329, must adhere to a set of objective standards, including the importance of the geographical location of a country; its political will to eradicate drug abuse; its budget devoted to anti-drug activities; the existence of a comprehensive legal system to counter drug problems; the application of socio-economic remedial measures; its success to date in controlling narcotic drugs; involvement in regional and subregional cooperation; and the extent of cooperation with concerned United Nations bodies. Setting such standards constitutes an appropriate framework for UNDCP and responsible countries to assist technically and financially the front-line States in their struggle against the drug menace.

In this connection, we are encouraged by the adoption by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the resolution entitled "Tehran Declaration", on the subject of that Declaration, which encourages States to enter into arrangements similar to the Declaration in order to take appropriate action to combat drug abuse. The Declaration also proposed the establishment of a regional bureau of UNDCP in south-west Asia. Its establishment would enable UNDCP to ensure the smooth implementation and effective monitoring of programmes in south-west and central Asia and facilitate and promote cooperation between countries in the region and organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, as well as international and financial institutions.

Allow me to conclude by reiterating my Government's firm commitment to participate in all regional and international cooperation aimed at eliminating the drug scourge from society at large.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to inform the Assembly that I have received a letter dated 26 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, requesting that the Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the Observer of the Holy See during this debate.

Members will recall that, in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly, observer non-Member States may normally make statements only in the Main Committees. However, following consultations, and taking into account the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly take a decision to hear the Observer of the Holy See in the course of the debate in plenary meeting on this important issue.

May I take it that there is no objection to this proposal?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Canada.

Mrs. FRECHETTE (Canada) *(interpretation from French)*: It is with a great deal of interest that Canada addresses the Assembly on the subject of international control of narcotics, an issue that requires constant vigilance on the part of the international community.

Because of its nature, this problem requires especially vigorous international cooperation. We are very pleased to note that this cooperation is growing stronger and more effective on all fronts. The number of delegations on the list of speakers demonstrates the importance attached to the issue of illegal narcotic substances. We firmly believe that only by effective joint action will we be able to bring to an end the scourges of narcotics consumption and abuse. Global international cooperation, with the participation of every nation, supported by a strong national will, is the key to success.

We must take advantage of these special meetings of the General Assembly to continue our effort to reduce the demand for drugs and put an end to drug trafficking. This is an excellent opportunity to review the cooperative mechanisms established to achieve these goals. A draft

resolution to be presented on the initiative of the Mexican delegation contains many positive elements that we support wholeheartedly. The Government of Mexico should be proud of its initiative.

We are convinced that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) must take the lead in coordinating international projects. It is important to ensure that the UNDCP's programmes are well planned and well managed. We must remember that they cannot all be implemented at once. That should be borne in mind when evaluating the results.

Allow me quickly to summarize the measures that have been taken in Canada. The Canadian anti-drug strategy was established in 1987, with an initial budget of 210 million Canadian dollars, originally for five years; that period was extended for another five years in 1992. The strategy was carefully designed to reduce both supply and demand. Some 65 per cent of the resources allocated for this strategy are used for demand reduction, while the other third goes to Police and Customs programmes to combat drug trafficking.

Our approach encompasses the entire population of Canada and covers a wide range of activities and substances: alcohol abuse, overconsumption of medicines, doping in sports, inhalation of toxic vapours, the consumption and production of cannabis and the consumption of cocaine, heroin and other drugs. This multifaceted programme has required the participation of numerous Federal government departments. Through our cooperative efforts, we have obtained some very satisfying results. However, we cannot become complacent in our success, and we are keenly aware that much remains to be done.

(spoke in English)

Canada also cooperates fully with its international partners. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police work with their foreign counterparts, providing courses and seminars. The Customs section of our federal Revenue Department works with its Caribbean colleagues on the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council. Canada also takes part in the Financial Action Task Force to counteract the laundering of illicit profits.

Canada has played an active part in various multilateral organizations to achieve the objectives of the Global Programme of Action. We have provided voluntary funds to the UNDCP and to the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, attached to the Organization of American States.

We salute the considerable efforts made by some countries to reduce supply. However, we do not feel that such efforts can be effective unless accompanied by demand-reduction efforts. Dealing with demand strikes at the root of the problem and is, we feel, far more effective in the long run. In addition, an appropriate legal environment, free of corruption, supported by a strong political will, is essential to combating drug trafficking. Reducing the demand for drugs is also achieved through programmes of education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. A society must provide alternatives in order to minimize the attraction of drugs.

We know that there is no easy solution to drug abuse and its attendant problems. These problems are so much a part of the social fabric that only a long-term, multifaceted approach will produce solid results. Canada is firmly committed to this struggle and intends to continue cooperating actively at the international level.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Australia.

Mr. BUTLER (Australia): It is a sorry fact that in the last decade of the twentieth century virtually all nations are threatened by the use of and trade in illicit narcotic drugs. This threatens the lives of human beings, the fabric of societies and, in some cases, the very security of the State itself. We are all affected by this dreadful reality, and so it is right that the international community should address together the problems of the production, trafficking in and consumption of illicit narcotic drugs. In this context, it was very important that in its Summit communiqué of 31 January 1992 the Security Council embraced the concept of major non-military threats to security, and identified among those threats the illicit drugs trade.

It is three and a half years since the Assembly addressed the illicit drugs issue at its seventeenth special session, in February 1990. It is time that we do so again, because such sessions provide an opportunity for us to take stock of United Nations efforts to curb the illicit drugs threat, to exchange relevant national views and experience and then to determine, together, what needs to be done in the future.

There have been a number of important developments since the seventeenth special session. Undoubtedly the most important has been the establishment of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

charged with the exclusive responsibility for coordinating and providing leadership for all United Nations drug control activities. The Programme came into being on 1 March 1991, and while that was only a short time ago Australia believes that UNDCP has made a very impressive beginning to meeting the challenge. The United Nations now has a focal point for its illicit drug control efforts and an organization with the necessary status to provide effective leadership to that effort. So Australia compliments the Executive Director of UNDCP and his dedicated staff on their achievements and reiterates its high-level political commitment to and continued support for and cooperation with UNDCP and the United Nations system in the fight against the proliferation of illicit drugs.

The United Nations already has an impressive array of policy instruments at its disposal - the Global Programme of Action, adopted at the seventeenth special session, the System-Wide Action Plan and the international drug Conventions. These constitute an impressive framework guiding the efforts of the Organization and Governments in their fight against the threat posed by illicit drugs. The critical challenges at this stage are to fill in the policy gaps and to fill out the detail and, where necessary, to breathe life into that framework. The UNDCP has already undertaken important work in this regard.

From our perspective, the critical areas which require further emphasis are the development of additional detailed operational blueprints to implement UNDCP's regional and subregional strategies; greater emphasis on the development of balanced national drug control plans; and support for UNDCP's effort to encourage the evolution of comprehensive alternative development strategies for those countries most seriously affected by the scourge of illicit narcotics.

Australia recognizes the need for other United Nations organs to support UNDCP in the development and implementation of comprehensive alternative development strategies, particularly for the most seriously affected countries. We urge all organizations contributing to the System-Wide Action Plan to give the highest possible priority to their contribution to the international drug control effort.

The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations Global Programme of Action (A/48/286) is the major background document for our work during these meetings. The Global Programme of Action, together with the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, should guide Government action at the international, regional and national levels. The report, based on the responses of Member States, makes a large number of recommendations for future action, and all of them warrant careful study.

But we would note, in particular, the need for States to reaffirm the higher priority given to drug-prevention and drug-reduction programmes and to encourage the mobilization of public support, including support from non-governmental organizations, in the development and execution of such programmes; the need for flexibility in the development of appropriate treatment and rehabilitation programmes, particularly in the face of the AIDS pandemic; the need for States to draw up master plans defining their priorities and objectives and to determine the steps to be taken in implementing their national drug-control strategies; the need for States to work to promote regional and subregional cooperation in forging effective strategies to contain the threat posed by illicit narcotics; and the need for Governments to work in the governing bodies of all the relevant specialized agencies and international financial institutions involved in providing technical assistance to ensure that the illicit drugs dimension is taken fully into account in programming decisions.

As the Global Programme of Action makes clear, responsibility for developing an effective national narcotics control strategy lies with Member States. Therefore, in seeking to identify sticking points impeding more effective action we should not overlook the critical ingredient, namely, the political will of Member States to implement existing policy arrangements. Indeed, it is greater political will and additional resources, rather than more policy documents, that will make the difference between success and failure in the years ahead.

As part of its contribution to this debate and action, Australia is distributing today to all delegations a copy of its National Drug Strategic Plan for 1993-1997. We believe this Plan is a practical example of the link between national activity and international drug control objectives within the context of the United Nations Global Programme of Action. We believe it is a practical illustration of the implementation of a comprehensive demand reduction and prevention programme, as part of a balanced national strategic plan of the sort advocated by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-sixth session. We believe this Plan provides us with an effective framework to mobilize all relevant sections of the Australian community to work to minimize, to the greatest extent possible, the harm caused by illicit drugs. While it remains difficult to measure results precisely, we will

rigorously evaluate our performance against the detailed objectives of this Plan.

In this initial phase, we willingly share the fruit of our efforts with other delegations as a contribution to the enhancement of international cooperation in this field.

I should also like to announce at this time that, in order to underline the importance Australia attaches to enhanced regional cooperation and the development of balanced national drug control strategies, Australia will host a regional conference on drug abuse in February 1994. The primary objectives of that conference will be to assist countries in Asia and the Pacific region to identify the principles and steps necessary to develop balanced drug control strategies and to enhance regional cooperation and networking in the fight against illicit drugs.

The decision to hold these plenary sessions in itself signifies the continuing concern of the international community at the threat posed by illicit narcotics. To do justice to that concern, the conclusions of our debate should be substantive in nature and must show the way forward. The decisions taken by the plenary should reinforce not only the political importance of the issue and the coordination and leadership role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, but also the determination of the international community to intensify its cooperation in seeking remedies to the threat posed by illicit drugs.

We are dealing with a real threat to people and to States. We must act vigorously and together to defeat that threat.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Carlos Amat Fores, Minister of Justice of Cuba.

Mr. AMAT FORES (Cuba) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation would like to join preceding speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election, and we wish to express our willingness to cooperate with you. We know that given your experience and wisdom these high-level meetings will be crowned with success.

I should like to commend the work being done by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, and Mr. Herbert Shaepe, Secretary of the International Narcotics Control Board.

The United Nations and its Member States have made many efforts in the last few years to curtail or stop illegal drug trafficking and its consequences. The special attention given this item at this forty-eighth session is evidence of this.

These efforts have led to the adoption of the following international documents and instruments by United Nations bodies: the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, the Political Statement and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session. In addition, the Assembly proclaimed the period from 1991 to 2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse. In another resolution adopted in December 1990, it established the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which was set up in March 1991.

It has now become almost commonplace to describe the dangers that drugs pose to health; their threat to social stability and to the welfare of millions of people; the terrible medical, ethical and moral effects of drugs, particularly among young people; the relationship between demand, consumption, manufacturing, supply, trafficking and illegal distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances and the economic, social and cultural conditions of countries affected by these activities; and the infiltration into and corruption of many Government structures as a result of the ever-increasing economic power of the transnational criminal organizations involved in the illegal trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. All these factors undermine social and economic development activities, weakening cultural and human values and threatening the very foundations of States.

The most highly regarded international organizations, non-governmental organizations and various countries of the world have assigned to the drug problem outstanding experts, Government officials and distinguished personalities but, despite profound and comprehensive analyses, despite the resolutions and recommendations adopted, and despite the collective and individual actions taken by countries, the drug problem becomes every day more acute and distressing to all.

In spite of the efforts, lately increased, by countries and institutions, the consumption, production and illegal trafficking of drugs have increased and spread throughout the world. Related crimes have increased proportionately, and the international community is becoming alarmed by the growing threat and the world-wide reach of this phenomenon. The situation becomes even more dramatic when we see that more and more human beings are becoming involved in the consumption, manufacturing and

distribution of drugs; that countries which heretofore were not consumers are now having to face this new crisis; that new geographic areas are involved in drug trafficking and consumption; and that money laundering is damaging even the healthiest of economies.

In fact, efforts at prevention and control have not been successful enough, and in the case of the poorest countries, the sacrifices that they have had to make are far beyond their capabilities. There is a profound difference between consuming and producing countries. Most of the demand comes from, and the major consumers are, the richer countries. These, as a result of illegal drug trafficking, often reap most of the economic benefits.

Likewise, when consumer countries offer assistance to producing countries - either bilaterally or through international financial institutions - they force them to accept conditions which at times result in a loss of sovereignty or, at best, political submission. This sets a negative precedent in regional and international relations.

As far as my Government is concerned, drug consumption is the generating force in manufacturing and trafficking. This is why we believe that the main emphasis in our struggle against drugs should be on reducing demand, if we truly want to achieve long-term goals.

We are aware that problems related to illegal drug activities and the actions taken to combat such activities concern every country of the world in one way or another; if we are to win the battle, we must recognize that it is the duty of the entire international community to fight this evil.

The fight must be waged with complete respect for the sovereignty of States and absolute compliance with the norms of international law, and without intervention or the extraterritorial application of the internal laws of one State under the pretext of combating drugs.

Joint action against drug trafficking must guarantee the full sovereignty of every people or country, however small. The powerful countries must not be given the right to lay down guidelines and impose their will by force. No one can lay claim to the leadership of this fight, or impose such leadership with armies, agencies or unilateral measures.

As has often been repeated in international forums, Cuba, because of its geographical position, is affected by the consequences of international drug trafficking. With a real political will, we have made serious efforts to combat it, which have for the most part met with success.

Despite our difficult economic situation, aggravated by the United States blockade, and made worse still by the passage of the Torricelli law which, among other things, prevents or hinders us from legitimately acquiring narcotics and other medications needed for medical treatment and research, our work in dealing with drugs that were being illegally trafficked has produced manifest results.

Although drug consumption is not a social phenomenon in Cuba, preventive activities are carried out to avoid drug abuse, and we work daily to perfect existing controls and to improve our knowledge of the matter so that our country does not become a victim of the scourge of drugs.

At the international level, Cuba has continued negotiating and signing bilateral agreements. Several accords have been signed with countries in our region, and we are now in the final stages of signing new accords both within and outside the region. We are also maintaining mutually advantageous cooperation with other countries.

This year my Government submitted to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) the Republic of Cuba's master plan to combat illicit drug traffic. Likewise, responding to the appeal by the United Nations, we have prepared a plan for the Decade against Drug Abuse. In July 1992 we established the Cuban National Committee, made up of agencies and institutions involved in the fight against drugs, which is preparing numerous activities.

We recognize the pressing need to continue improving committed international cooperation. We must be objective in analysing what has been done so far and what results have been achieved. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances was an important step forward. However, my delegation wishes to reiterate its well-grounded concern that the precepts contained in article 17 of that Convention could become the legal pretext for illegitimate action by one State which in the field of drug trafficking is trying arbitrarily to apply - and has already done so - the new and questionable theory of "limited sovereignty", which flagrantly violates the sacred principles of international law. There is no judicial, political or any other reason that can justify the violation of those principles. No one ever has the right to violate a country's sovereignty, and non-intervention is an international obligation.

One State's malicious interpretations of article 17 have opened the door to arbitrary actions, acts of piracy and offenses against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another State. This is extremely disturbing and completely unacceptable to my country, which is therefore prevented from ratifying the Convention until there is a true interpretation of article 17, which could constitute a true guarantee for developing countries, allowing them to defend themselves against the aggression of the more powerful. In the terms in which it is stated, the fight requires open, sincere and effective cooperation between States, as well as dynamism and objectivity in the assistance offered for it.

Top priority must be given to the establishment of new formal, genuine commitments to reduce the demand, production, sale, traffic and illegal distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances; the improvement of standards of living through international cooperation for development, as an alternative for those who produce and sell drugs because of extreme poverty; a careful review by each country of its national legislation on the various aspects of the problem, in order to update and harmonize those laws - we attach great importance to this, because the legal means must be created to judge and punish criminal activities and confiscate the illegitimate wealth they produce; strengthening of the international fight against organized crime involved in drug production and other illicit activities involving drugs, as well as the illegal traffic in arms and explosives; the establishment of international rules and standards allowing for uniform treatment of crimes linked to drug trafficking.

We must update existing agreements and make them fully effective. It would also be worthwhile to analyse some aspects which have not yet been studied in depth and which could at some point require international action - for example, money laundering and control of the use of chemical precursors.

Before concluding, my delegation wishes to reiterate my country's readiness to consider bilaterally with other countries the possibility of cooperation on various aspects of the problem so as to confront the drug phenomenon better, and our readiness to sign the various relevant agreements to give effect to our decisions.

Each country's strategies and plans must be backed up by a real political will to confront the complex phenomenon of drugs. This political will must also be present in international cooperation and concerted action by States. This spirit, and not the use or threat of force in international relations, must guide our common action so that it may achieve successful results.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on Mr. Arnaldo Velarde Ramírez, Head of the Office Coordinating Joint Activities against Drug Trafficking of Peru.

Mr. VELARDE RAMIREZ (Peru) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The gathering that we are attending today is designed to gauge the true dimensions and political significance of the issue of the campaign against drug trafficking on the overall agenda of the United Nations. We are here to give fresh political impetus to the issue of drugs within the General Assembly context.

We all recall the special session of the United Nations held in February 1990, at which the overall comprehensive approach to cooperation on a multilateral level was established. That approach was a result of clear agreement on the principles contained in the political statement, among which the principles of shared responsibility and international solidarity stand out. At the same time the United Nations International Drug Control Programme was set up, and the period from 1991 to 2000 was proclaimed the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

Let us consider what has been achieved in the period that has elapsed since then. In practice, in the course of the first three years of the Decade, it would appear that for various reasons which need to be studied, we have not addressed all the components of the global strategy simultaneously and in an integrated way. The efforts that we have made on the international level in that period have been targeted towards combating the problem by means of strategies aimed at reducing demand and efforts to reduce illicit drug trafficking. Less attention has been given to strategies designed to reduce supply, and thus we have lost sight of the comprehensive approach to which we conceptually aspire and which we wish to see underlying and bolstering our action.

We need therefore to return to the intrinsic purposes and significance of the comprehensiveness of our action, so that regardless of whether our country is a producer, a consumer or a country of transit, we may remain alert and active in the face of all the manifestations of drug trafficking.

In these circumstances, drug trafficking has diversified in means and forms, outstripping any of our best efforts. Furthermore, there has been a multiplier effect, strangely enough, because organized crime has responded to greater

interdiction and control with a greater level of drug production, stimulating an increase in illicit cultivation.

The Government of Peru has been constantly endeavouring to control and eradicate illicit drug trafficking and associated crime through interdiction measures, and at the same time it has devoted substantial effort to finding new approaches to the supply side, incorporating the social dimension into its efforts to eradicate this scourge once and for all. Hence the importance that we attach to perfecting the components of a strategy of alternative development.

Certainly, there have been a number of attempts to give effect to this concept in the Organization's work, although it needs to be said, in terms of concrete results, that the lack of any overall vision has hampered the achievement of the hoped-for results. This has led us to seek points of agreement on this aspect, and here we should pay particular attention to the results of the meetings that were held in Berlin and in Lima. Indeed, this past September, the first inter-American meeting of experts in alternative development took place in Lima. For the first time, this regional forum, which serves to pool inter-American efforts to combat drug trafficking, embarked on the exploration of a possible solution to the problem from an economic and social perspective. This exercise, which centres on alternative development, is not only a contribution to the doctrine on the subject, but is also a pragmatic step towards designing new regional strategies.

This work has gradually led to a preliminary consensus on the components of the strategy of alternative development. This is a strategy designed to prevent or solve the problems arising from illicit production. In essence, not only does it propose crop substitution, but it also aims at fully incorporating the social groups involved in such activities into a lawful economy by means of plans and programmes that put into effect an integrated system of socio-economic development. Such a system would give particular consideration to the central actors in the problem, in an environmentally sustainable framework and with the necessary support of transparent and less restrictive world markets. The restoration and the preservation of the area of the richest biodiversity in the world, that is, the Amazon region, is a genuine possibility with the strategy of alternative development.

The message delivered yesterday on behalf of the Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, is in accord with this approach. He indicated that the problem of drugs was a global threat to the same extent as the damage inflicted on the environment, AIDS and poverty itself. It is not a question of adding yet another concept to those with which the United Nations system already works. An alternative development strategy, attacking as it does the roots of the problem, offers greater promise of success in combating drug trafficking in the present circumstances, since because of its scope it is the most energetic response in combating the activities of organized crime.

We are therefore gratified that the draft resolution (A/48/L.12) which we shall very probably be adopting today, and which represents a relaunching of the multilateral effort to combat drugs, contains as one of its basic tasks anti-drug cooperation in programmes of alternative development.

The Government of Peru works in close cooperation with the Organization through dynamic coordination with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Experiences in the field have provided a basis for shared apprenticeship, which has gradually enhanced the effectiveness of cooperation programmes in various areas of national priority. My country's commitment at the highest political level to continue enhancing that cooperation, as well as the tireless work of Dr. Giorgio Giacomelli, are tangible proof of the real progress that can be made in the immediate future.

Peru has given tangible proof of its sense of moral responsibility to the international community in our work to combat this scourge. It should be noted that advanced legislation which controls and punishes crimes associated with drug trafficking - such as the diversion of precursors and essential chemicals, trafficking in arms and explosives, money-laundering, and in particular the dismantling and eradication of the links between terrorist organizations and drug trafficking are central parts of our policy. To this we must add successful control of airports and the interception of aircraft that are being used for illicit purposes.

The progress that has been achieved is the result of close cooperation between public and private institutions, with active participation on the part of the public in a struggle in which our nation is daily becoming more and more united.

At the same time, the Standing Intersectoral Commission is trying to coordinate approaches to achieve a national master plan as soon as possible, harmonize national anti-drug legislation and create an organic system to implement national anti-drug policy.

No one here is blind to the challenges we face or the daunting obstacles we must overcome if we are to achieve total success. But the reality of these formidable challenges should not dishearten us. Peru, as a country and a society, has also faced considerable and sometimes discouraging difficulties; but given a well-defined purpose it was able to overcome them, demonstrating that where there is a firm resolve anything is possible and the most cherished dream can come true.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Amir Khasru Chowdhury, Member of Parliament of Bangladesh.

Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh): The drug scourge today is a global phenomenon. It is an issue that threatens both our present and future generations. The world-wide consciousness and our collective drive against drug abuse and narcotics trafficking are still far from driving a nail into the heart of the issue. In fact, the general disorganization and degeneration that our societies are experiencing in varying degrees are being exacerbated to a large extent by drug trafficking and abuse.

What appears to be a matter for great alarm is the fact that illicit drug trafficking is thriving despite the collective will of the international community to thwart it. Is it that the traffickers are so powerful as to have the arrogance to disregard the authority of national Governments and to test the will of the international community? Or is it that our combat strategies are somehow flawed, allowing traffickers a false sense of security that they can pursue their evil designs? These are aspects of the issue that merit our most serious attention as we gather here to examine the status of international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse.

One of the biggest incentives to illegal drug trafficking is the immense profitability of the trade. Our primary effort must therefore be to hit at this area. To put it more simply, the trade will die only if we can ensure that there is no market for it. In this, we must mount a multi-pronged offensive directed against the production, distribution and consumption of illegal drugs.

Because of its illicit nature, it is almost impossible to estimate the exact extent of the world's total drug production. But given the fact that it is being carried out on a global basis and spreading across both hemispheres, there is no reason to doubt its enormous scale. Poorer and developing countries are often accused of being lenient towards drug production because they have few other meaningful economic options. Political instability and insurgencies are also viewed as ideal conditions for illegal drug production. These are undoubtedly forceful arguments, but there must be a larger dimension to the issue, since illegal drug production is not limited to the so-called third world countries alone. Whatever the source, the issue calls for a concerted and collective approach. If conditions of poverty encourage drug production, let the international community provide the necessary input to eliminate poverty. If insurgency is a factor preventing enforcement agencies from reaching the areas of drug production, let the international community come to the aid of those Governments to fight the insurgency.

Our efforts to eliminate drug production will not be worth while unless we can crack down on the marketing and distribution mechanisms. And here lies our most formidable obstacle. The trafficking of drugs is conducted by syndicated cartels and drug lords who wield tremendous power. They are a species that have no scruples, suffer no conscience and have total disregard for human life and dignity. They have created their own empires, have their own private armies and enjoy a seemingly impregnable sense of security.

The conduct of this heinous trade is done through transnational consortiums. The chain involves the acquisition of chemicals to produce drugs, their transportation and distribution, and the laundering of profits through financial institutions. Drug traffickers are constantly developing new codes in their communications system and novel tricks to avoid detection. The courier caught at the port is merely a pawn in a game played by an unseen boss. In most cases, the courier takes the punishment while the principal criminal remains at large. To win this war of wits, we must clearly be on top of the situation. Our intelligence network and detection technology must surely be flawless, constantly updated and improved. Because the combat is being fought on a global basis, we cannot afford to leave any one front less equipped than the other. But it hardly needs to be emphasized that the developing countries - particularly the least developed among them - are at an obvious disadvantage in this respect. There must be a pooling of resources and sharing of technology if our global offensive is really to succeed.

The horrors of drug abuse and its tragic consequences find their manifestation in the consumers. Drug consumption and addiction are like a contagious virus spreading in an epidemic. The tragedy begins with the next generation, our youth. Frustration from a lack of alternatives, recreational facilities and employment opportunities more often than not makes youth an easy prey to the drug menace. Addiction breeds crime, terrorism and violence and threatens a total breakdown of

the social fabric. The magnitude of drug abuse as it stands today has spared no society. The campaign against drug abuse must therefore begin early. Motivation has to be there right from the elementary-school levels and children must be taught to avoid drugs like the plague. Institutionalized support to treat addicts and reintegrate them into society must be strengthened. The family institution, which serves as the anchor of social integrity, must be involved in this effort. For this, we must be prepared to provide whatever support is necessary.

The issue of drug abuse and illicit trafficking is a matter of serious concern to Bangladesh. Given our proximity to the so-called Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent, our country is vulnerable to in-transit drug trafficking. As a small nation beset with many problems we are cautious not to allow drug abuse to add to our woes. Our Government, under Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, is determined to address the issue on all fronts: national, subregional, regional and global.

The fact that the issue has not yet assumed any alarming dimension in Bangladesh is the result of certain traditional and religious checks and balances ingrained in our society. But social safeguards alone are not enough to combat the drug issue in its entirety; it is a crime that can be controlled only if we are prepared to be harsh in hunting down the criminal. Our goal is not just to check drug abuse, but to checkmate the drug trafficker. We in Bangladesh therefore have stringent, punitive sentences for drug trafficking. We believe that such measures are appropriate for those who profit from human life and misery.

Our national Narcotics Control Act of 1990 strictly prohibits the cultivation, production, processing, transportation, sale or possession of illicit drugs. The administrative body set up in support of this law, the Narcotics Control Board, is the focal point for all anti-drug activities in the country. On the curative side, we have set up a central treatment centre for drug addicts. The Government is also addressing itself to the rehabilitation of former addicts and their reintegration into mainstream society.

In cooperation with bilateral donors and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, a five-year master plan on drug-abuse control has been undertaken, beginning in January 1993. The major thrust of the plan is on law enforcement, treatment and rehabilitation, and preventive education and information.

At the regional level, Bangladesh and the six other member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) are addressing the issue through active regional cooperation. The signing of the SAARC Convention on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which Bangladesh has already ratified, is a landmark in this direction.

Bangladesh is also actively involved in the international efforts against drug abuse. Our efforts in this regard are fully in line with the 1990 United Nations Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action. Bangladesh was among the very first countries to ratify the 1988 Convention against illicit drugs and psychotropic substances. We are also party to the United Nations drug Conventions of 1961 and 1971.

We trust that further strengthening of the United Nations efforts through a system-wide action plan and coordination between the specialized agencies can effectively complement national drives against drug abuse and trafficking. There is much truth in the saying that prevention is always better than cure, and we wish to underscore here that countries, such as Bangladesh, where drug abuse has not yet become a major problem need our urgent attention before it is just too late.

It is a matter of gratification to my delegation that delegations here are unanimous in our desire to control drug abuse. The statements of other representatives espousing stronger integration in the international drive against drug abuse, and support for national programmes, reassure us that we are together in our cause.

We are happy that the Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, has also accorded the issue all due importance.

We trust that our deliberations in this special series of meetings will provide valuable insights and clear guidance to our ongoing efforts towards a drug-free world.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. TARMIDZI (Indonesia): I should like to express the Indonesian delegation's deep appreciation to the Secretary-General for his thoughtful and informative message to this Assembly, as delivered by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

Let me also express our thanks to you, Mr. President, for your opening statement, delivered yesterday.

Indonesia is greatly disturbed by the continuing threats posed to virtually all countries by the international trade in illicit narcotics and by drug abuse. Although this issue has remained a top priority on the global agenda, the myriad problems of illicit trafficking and drug abuse remain undiminished, even though substantial initiatives have been launched in many areas.

For some countries, the threats posed have become a tragic reality, as institutions have become strained and the capacity of national and local law enforcement have been taken beyond their capacity for an effective response. Health and social-welfare services have likewise been greatly overburdened in providing for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug abusers, and for the associated health problems.

For the developed and developing countries alike, narcotics trafficking and abuse have undeniably contributed to a serious deterioration in social values, ethics and healthy lifestyles. The drugs dilemma has likewise retarded development at all levels by substantially diverting urgently needed resources, financial as well as human. This haemorrhage of financial resources must be brought to a quick end. As the drugs problem is global in dimension, we have come to a collective realization and acknowledgement that only global, integrated solutions will offer any remedy of lasting value.

Thus it was that, in 1987, the Ministerial-level International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was convened in Vienna and expressed the political will and determination to address this problem in a comprehensive and effective manner at all levels. That Conference was a watershed event, with its unanimous adoption of a Declaration and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities.

The mutual understanding between countries - producers, consumers and transit - has since been greatly strengthened and firmly secured in their agreement that a balanced approach is necessary, addressing the aspects of both supply and demand. In that connection, my delegation would like to underline the potential of rural-development programmes that encourage legal cultivation and make it an attractive prospect for farmers by offering them a fair return for their labour. Furthermore, efforts aimed at the destruction of illicit crops should be undertaken with due regard to the environmental impact.

Nearly four years have elapsed since the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly was convened, during which a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action were adopted with a view to enhancing international drug-control strategy and activities. A significant consequence was the integration of the United Nations drug-control bodies into one single United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). This was a necessary and welcome restructuring effort to streamline United Nations activities in this field and provide for the optimum utilization of scarce resources. The special session, moreover, reaffirmed the view that because of the tragic nature of the problem, international solidarity and the concerted, collective and simultaneous action of the international community were required.

In that connection, my delegation would like to welcome and support the draft resolution that was well prepared by the delegation of Mexico, and submitted by the President as draft resolution A/48/L.12, entitled "International drug control", as yet one more concrete step in strengthening international cooperation.

On the subregional level, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) continues to strengthen collaboration amongst its members, implementing projects of the group of ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters in such areas as preventive drug education, interdiction, research- and information-sharing, law enforcement, and treatment and rehabilitation. I should note that this is in line with activities recommended by the Secretary-General with reference to the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. Similarly, ASEAN continues to work in close cooperation with other States in the region, as well as with its dialogue partners, in a common search for pragmatic but effective drug-control solutions.

ASEAN cooperation with the European Community remains strong, with such projects as the European Community technical assistance mission, which has reviewed ASEAN's needs in the areas of drug rehabilitation and drug-abuse prevention. In that connection, ASEAN Senior Officials on Drug Matters held several working group meetings on prevention education, treatment and rehabilitation, law enforcement and research. ASEAN also maintains close working relations with the United States and anticipates the convening of an ASEAN-United States conference on drugs in the near future.

The United Nations ad hoc inter-agency meeting on coordination in matters of international drug abuse control pointed to the need to strengthen cooperative ties with

non-governmental organizations, which ASEAN has resolved to do. The twenty-sixth ASEAN Standing Committee meeting, held on 27 and 28 May 1993, approved an application by the group ASEAN Non-Governmental Organizations for Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse to have a formal working relationship with ASEAN. Likewise, Indonesia relies on the important contribution of non-governmental organizations and of community participation in such areas as education in drug prevention, and in the important area of rehabilitation.

The strong cooperative arrangements that exist between ASEAN and its various dialogue partners, as well as with other States within its region, have strengthened the capacity of its States members for effective response. Such a national, subregional and interregional structure could, in my view, serve as one model for the promotion of international drug control.

United Nations drug control treaties have placed effective juridical mechanisms at the disposal of the international community, facilitating necessary cooperation among nations in drug control. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has made a strong addition by addressing such crucial aspects as money-laundering and mutual legal assistance among States. As a signatory, Indonesia will work with others to ensure its optimum success. In this regard, my delegation would like to note that the UNDCP has been providing such assistance, and should continue to render this important service.

Let me conclude by saying that, just as drug abuse contributes to social deterioration, poverty and despair provide a fertile ground for the sale and abuse of narcotics. All countries, but particularly developing countries, have experienced the negative effects of a poor global economy and resource restrictions that have adversely impacted on such crucial areas as the creation of productive employment opportunities. Therefore, long-term solutions to social welfare issues, and particularly to drug-abuse prevention, must take into account the fundamental needs and aspirations of society, and the progressive improvement of the human condition - physically, ethically and religiously. This will require a commitment by both North and South in areas of economic cooperation, as well as their continued commitment to the goals to be achieved during this United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on Mr. Alberto Lestelle, Secretary of State for Programming on Drug Prevention of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. LESTELLE (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I shall read out only portions of my written statement, for the full text contains many things that have already been said and that will be said again before the day is over. I shall use the time allotted to me to share some of my thoughts on this subject.

First of all, we would like to acknowledge this important opportunity to participate in these meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the important and serious issue of drug control.

We thank the delegation of Mexico for preparing, together with other delegations, the draft resolution submitted by the President. Recognizing once more the value of concentrating all the Organization's efforts in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, we take note of the important work being carried out by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the International Narcotics Control Board.

The circumstances of the so-called transit States are unique and are not adequately reflected in the initiatives for international cooperation. These countries, including my own, require greater and increasing international aid to fight successfully against this phenomenon. Hence, we would like to see the international programmes of cooperation pay increased attention to the special situation of the countries I refer to.

Among other things, we need the adoption of the necessary legal instruments to control drugs, adapting them to the new modalities of this crime and reflecting in the legal framework elements such as the undercover agent, the informer and all the modalities set forth in the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

The repression of illicit drug trafficking should be balanced with preventive aspects related to reducing demand. This latter issue must be approached through comprehensive prevention programmes including real and feasible plans for alternative development, within which the programmes for productive and profitable micro-enterprises should be the axis of employment policies, a key preventive factor in developing countries. We must pay special attention to the causes of the problem: the unfair terms of international trade, which condemn farmers in developing countries to face the alternative of either producing illicit drugs or opting for humiliating subsistence conditions, must be analysed and assessed in their true dimension.

We would like to state here that the Argentine Government is opposed to any initiative aimed at legalizing any activity now considered illicit in the area of drugs. This experiment has already been tried in several countries with negative and traumatic results for the community.

Allow me now to refer briefly to the situation in Argentina. In 1989, when it took office, the Government of President Carlos Raúl Menem created within the purview of the presidency a Bureau for Programming on Drug Prevention and Drug-Trafficking Control. This does not report to any single ministry, but develops policies under the direct orders of the national executive branch.

In our view, this organizational structure is a new, creative development that goes beyond those interministry commissions that encounter difficulties in their operation and functioning.

Here I should like briefly to comment on one point. There is an action and a reaction in illicit drug trafficking and related crime. Action is homogeneous, direct and the same in all countries, whether the United Kingdom, the United States, Argentina, Costa Rica, Panama, Australia, Bolivia, or any other country. The action of the drug-trafficking mafias is exactly the same in every country. In each country they produce drugs directly or through intermediaries; they operate illegally by smuggling precursor chemicals; they launder money in every country; they promote drug consumption in all countries; they make young people and street children sick with drugs and they bring death in all countries, without exception. In other words, the drug-trafficking mafias operate in a manner that is consistent, organic, ongoing and always the same.

How do we, the Governments, respond to this homogeneity? Unfortunately, we respond with heterogeneity. Quite reasonably, every Government wants to establish a system to try to contain the phenomenon. One Government may perfectly properly, for each is free to choose, feel the Ministry of Health can deal with the problem, which is correct, because of course drug dependency is a sickness. But another Government may feel that action should be coordinated under the Ministry of Finance which is also correct, because money laundering is one of the most serious drug trafficking problems. Another Government might give the job to the Ministry of Security, another to the Ministry of Justice, another to Social Affairs, and another to a personal representative of the President. Without being hypocritical, perhaps I could say we are trying to defend ourselves using the Keystone Kops.

Consistency is important in action. At another international meeting a few days ago I was speaking with a Health Minister who had the job of coordinating all aspects related to this phenomenon, and I naturally asked him how he coordinated transborder controls. He replied "Oh, that's a problem for the Ministry of Defence." I then asked how he coordinated internal controls for internal security and he said "That's for the Ministry of the Interior." I then asked what he did to establish a system whereby prevention was part of the education programme, and he answered "That's a problem for the Ministry of Education." Dumbfounded, I then asked him "Who coordinates everything?" because all his answers were quite true. He answered "A Commission." That raised the obvious question of how often the Commission met. I was told "Maybe once a month." Fine, once a month. I then asked "Who coordinates the decisions of the Commission?" The Health Minister said "Well, sometimes it's me, and sometimes it's the Education Minister, depending on what aspect is involved."

In fact, therefore, all those procedures being carried out by Governments with considerable effort and sacrifice - sometimes with great resolve, sometimes with less resolve - mean that we do not have a homogeneous reaction to the homogeneous action being carried out by the drug-trafficking mafia, by which they are trying to attack our societies and destroy our families. Therefore, without wishing to interfere with the political decisions of Governments, perhaps my country might offer the international community a description of its experience in this field and suggest to Governments that national bodies be set up at the highest possible level to implement the policies of the Executive and to coordinate all the work relating to the problem so as to achieve the best results.

As we see it, there is no alternative, after so many meetings at the international level, we have been meeting for months, for years trying to understand a phenomenon which is becoming ever more complex. Without coordination at the government level it seems to us unlikely we can find the right remedy. Solutions are hard to find. We must become fully aware of the overriding importance of this issue in the United Nations and try at least to increase efforts and ensure coordination. If we do not have coordination - and I am not being pessimistic; I am being realistic - this increasingly complex problem will result in an increasing number of victims. Do representatives know what the real problem is? It is that the victimizers - those who produce, who traffic, who sell, who corrupt - are adults, but the victims are innocent: young people and children. We should think about that.

I should like quickly to speak of what has been done in my country. We have prevention programmes, public awareness campaigns, national publicity campaigns, sports programmes, preventive education programmes, training for teachers, workers and community leaders. There are courses on prevention, training leaders of society, sports people, educators, parents, grandparents, young people - everybody, including students in middle schools and primary schools.

We have an assistance plan, including help for families in difficult situations; more than 2,000 are receiving help to win their children back from this terrible scourge. We are also trying to provide treatment for people in jail. We offer public information services and support services for governmental and non-governmental organizations.

We have draft laws on psychotropic substances, alcoholism, prevention, assistance and services. Our international cooperation projects include seminars on community therapy co-sponsored by Daytop International, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) and the United States State Department; seminars dealing with the control of precursor chemicals; a Latin American plan for training in health, education and justice carried out by the Argentine Government in Costa Rica, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic; seminars on mobilizing communities, conducted in cooperation with the University of Oklahoma; and much, much more.

We must participate internationally in dealing with this problem, which has become truly international, and in the last four years we have signed agreements on cooperation to prevent drug abuse with Bolivia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, the United States, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Italy, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.

I should like to say, in conclusion, that my delegation fully supports the draft resolution that is before the Assembly. It is clearly a well-balanced text containing specific guidelines for the organizations of the United Nations system and setting out measures for a high-level follow-up of the provisions of the plan of action. We trust that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Augusto Durán Martínez, Deputy Minister of the Presidency of Uruguay.

Mr. DURAN MARTINEZ (Uruguay) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The drug phenomenon is an extremely complex problem - complex in that it has not just a single cause but many causes: economic, social, ethical, political, and so on. It is also complex in that it is not simply a health problem, but tends to undermine institutions, to corrupt society and, ultimately, to degrade the individual. Another factor that makes it complex is that the links in the chain of illicit drug trafficking, from cultivation to money laundering, from the production and illicit marketing of precursors and other chemical substances essential to the production of drugs to the manufacturing and consumption of and trafficking in drugs, are to be found in various countries, giving the problem a transnational character. This has led to a new type of criminality - organized crime, which, apart from the fact that it is extremely dangerous because of the vastness of the economic means available to it, makes classical liberal criminal law inadequate.

Owing to its complexity, the problem is not capable of being dealt with by means of a single response. It is necessary to take repressive measures to combat criminal activities; supportive measures aimed at the addict's reintegration into society; and, above all, educational measures designed to reduce consumption. And reduction of consumption is the key to solution of the problem.

These measures must not be taken in isolation; they must be coordinated. They must not be taken on a local basis; they must mobilize the entire international community. Naturally, action must be taken within the framework of the law and of respect for the sovereignty of States, and it must take account of the special characteristics of each State. In this regard, much has been done. However, despite the excellent work of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and despite Mr. Giacomelli's very effective leadership, the drug problem, generally speaking, has not lessened. On the contrary, it has increased. This obliges us to redouble our efforts to try new strategies. Here - in the United Nations - we have the ideal arena for an exchange of opinions on the question and for expressions of support for the excellent draft resolution that stemmed from Mexico's praiseworthy initiative.

Mr. Murthy (India), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In this area, international cooperation, by way of the exchange of information and the coordination of police investigations, is indispensable. In the legal area, too, international cooperation is vital to securing greater effectiveness in the prosecution and judicial processes. In

the technological and economic areas also, it is vital to the proper completion of various projects. In addition, it is obviously necessary that the trade barriers that impede or prevent the development of alternative methods be removed - something else that calls for international cooperation.

In all of this - apart from the bilateral activities that may be engaged in - the action of international organizations is extremely important. However, although international cooperation is vital, it is not enough if it does not go hand in hand with appropriate internal measures. Anyone who does not show the necessary political resolve to tackle the drug problem does not deserve cooperation, and there can be no redemption for a country that cooperates at the international level but does not take the appropriate domestic measures.

Uruguay is really a newcomer to this problem, and we have therefore begun only recently to take action in this respect. However, we accept that we have a real, legal duty - not just an ethical responsibility - to engage in the struggle against drugs. Indeed, we have recently been doing this with very strong political resolve. In accordance with international recommendations, the Government set up the National Board for the Prevention and Suppression of Illicit Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse to draw up policies in this area and to coordinate their implementation by the competent bodies.

The Republic is a signatory to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, but has not yet ratified it. However, ratification has been approved by the House of Representatives, and we expect early approval by the Senate. In any event, although the Convention is not in force in our country, we have been following its basic guidelines. Indeed, we have signed many treaties for legal assistance in penal matters - with the United States, with Spain, with the United Kingdom and with Brazil - and it is expected that these will be ratified very soon. In 1991 we signed cooperation agreements with Chile, with Bolivia and with Brazil, and these were ratified about a month ago.

The executive branch of government has also introduced a draft law which has already been approved by one of the Houses of our Parliament and which is designed to update our penal legislation on drugs, with a view to - among other objectives - criminalizing money laundering and the illicit production and marketing of precursors, in accordance with the guidelines of the Model Law drawn up by the Inter-American Commission for Drug Abuse Control. We have adopted legislative standards that will facilitate control by the Central Bank of Uruguay over the brokerage houses, with a view to making money laundering more difficult. Already, there is a large data bank, and studies were carried out recently with a view to formulating policies and putting them on sounder bases. Police work has been improved, and significant efforts are being made to set up a rehabilitation centre. Lastly, there has been a great deal of progress in both formal and informal aspects of prevention.

All those measures - in addition to Uruguay's active presence in the most important international forums in this field - clearly demonstrate its commitment to dealing with this problem.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Mr. Raul Del Mar, Member of the House of Representatives of the Philippines.

Mr. DEL MAR (Philippines): I am privileged to speak at the special high-level meetings of the General Assembly on a subject of grave concern to the world.

Mankind has been troubled by various scourges that have taken their toll in human life and suffering, bringing disease, economic deprivation and social dislocation to hapless populations. At no time in history, however, has mankind faced such a problem such as drug abuse, for it is a scourge that recognizes no boundaries. Indeed, drug abuse is a transnational problem of such magnitude that it is adversely affecting the growth levels of many countries.

My Government therefore welcomes this opportunity to examine, together with the other States Members of the United Nations, the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Aware of the grave threat posed by drug abuse to the health and well-being of our people, to the stability of nations and to the political, economic and social structures of societies, the Philippine Government has committed itself to a total war against the problem.

In the Philippines, the problems of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to cause serious concern nationwide. There are two factors responsible for the unabating drug problem: first, the high population density of bigger cities, coupled with rapid urbanization and, secondly, the proximity of drug sources and supply.

The Philippines' national drug strategy consists of two components: first, the legislative and regulatory

programme which takes care of the enactment of appropriate laws and the formulation of rules and regulations to reduce the availability of dangerous drugs, consistent with the legitimate medical requirements of the country; and, secondly, the drug law-enforcement programme, whose objectives include the eradication of cannabis plantations; the destruction or neutralization of drug trafficking networks; preventing the diversion of illicit drugs from authorized outlets; and controlling the importation of illicit drugs through rigid enforcement of customs laws and expanded international cooperation and coordination with foreign enforcement agencies to identify, monitor and neutralize international trafficking syndicates. It also covers treatment, rehabilitation, preventive education, training and information.

The national strategy hinges on two key concepts which call for keeping abusers away from drugs and for keeping drugs away from abusers. My Government has done much work in prevention and rehabilitation. The Philippine Congress has passed a law integrating drug prevention and control in intermediate- and secondary-school curricula and in the non-formal, informal and indigenous learning systems. The new law focuses on the ill effects of drug abuse, drug addiction or drug dependency.

In the case of rehabilitation, we have a serious lack of rehabilitation centres, but the ones we do have at the moment have excellent performance records. Our Narcotics Command Rehabilitation Centre has what appears to be the lowest relapse rate in the world - only 19 to 20 per cent, compared with the world rate of 40 to 50 per cent. Treatment is provided free of charge and is aimed at discipline.

The national fight against drug abuse has been hamstrung by logistics, a problem shared by many countries. The peculiar nature of our geography - we are a group of more than 7,000 islands at the maritime and strategic crossroads of South-East Asia - renders an already difficult problem more complex.

On a regional level, the Philippines has faithfully met its commitments and obligations as a party to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Declaration of Principles on Drug Abuse Control. It has maintained an active level of cooperation with the Governments and agencies concerned with drug matters among the ASEAN dialogue partners.

Internationally, the Philippines is a State Party to the 1961 and 1971 Conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention. We signed the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and appropriate steps have been taken towards its ratification.

Our programme and policies on drug abuse control are based on the Comprehensive and Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, which preceded the Global Programme of Action. We have consistently supported initiatives on drug abuse control emanating from both the General Assembly's Third Committee and the Economic and Social Council.

We are particularly encouraged by the introduction of a "drug dimension" in the economic and sectoral work of the World Bank, including its lending strategies. The inclusion of such a facility, not only in the World Bank but in regional banks as well, will provide countries which produce drugs with a needed boost in developing planning through the programming and implementation of activities to reduce illicit narcotic crops. Within the context of rural poverty-alleviation programmes in areas where narcotic drugs are cultivated, the work of the International Fund for Agricultural Development should be maintained.

In the long term, the illicit cultivation of drugs must be addressed within the context of integrated rural development programmes which aim at providing rural communities with an economically viable alternative to narcotic crops.

To help developing countries implement more effectively their respective national strategies under the Global Programme of Action and to enable them to participate more meaningfully in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, developed countries must provide opportunities and terms of access for agricultural products and other products of importance to the diversification of production from the growing of illicit narcotic crops.

There is also a pressing need for the sharing of relevant data at the international level and for the provision of technical assistance to developing countries to help strengthen their enforcement capabilities. By strengthening international cooperation and effecting a better coordination of policies and programmes, the use of limited resources available to Governments to implement domestic strategies would be optimized.

While it is true that the global nature of the drug problem warrants a global approach, the United Nations

and its member countries do recognize and appreciate the national work done by intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in the containment of the problem. In particular, the Philippine Government recognizes the humanitarian role of non-governmental organizations and volunteer groups in the prevention of drug abuse, in the rehabilitation of drug addicts, and in inculcating the ever-present danger of AIDS upon the consciousness of drug abusers.

My delegation commends the decision of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to call an international forum of non-governmental organizations next year to find ways of expanding cooperation on drug-demand reduction.

The end of the cold war has ushered in a period of deep uncertainty and change which exacerbates the drug problem. The capacity of many States to take remedial measures within their borders, as well as to act collectively for the safety and well-being of the world community, has been impaired by the upheavals of change. This situation has engendered an increase in the number of people at particular risk of drug addiction and abuse.

More than ever, the shared effort against illicit drug production, traffic and consumption must be maintained and strengthened. Towards this end, the Philippines will support proposals or initiatives for the full and effective implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Global Programme of Action against illicit production, supply, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Within its limited capacity, my Government wishes to lend assistance in improving policies and programmes in three specific areas: first, in the creation and maintenance of a readily accessible database of programmes carried out and projected within the United Nations system and in providing access to comparable systems maintained by multilateral, regional and bilateral organizations; second, in technical-cooperation activities in drug-abuse control, particularly at the operational level in especially vulnerable countries, such as those considered to be transit States and those under attack from traffickers, so as to afford them easy access to modern technology and thereby facilitate the location and environmentally safe destruction of narcotic drugs and, at the same time, maintain respect for the dignity and sovereignty of the receiving State; and, third, in judicial action with penal implications at the national level, and possibly at the international level, to fight powerful drug lords and cartels.

As a State Party to the drug Conventions and other relevant instruments, the Philippines reaffirms its commitment to the global effort to eradicate the drug problem and hereby undertakes to participate actively and judiciously in United Nations initiatives against the drug menace.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Algeria, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria)*(interpretation from French)*: The scheduling by the General Assembly of high-level plenary meetings to examine the status of and prospects for international drug control marks an important advance in the international community's growing awareness of the global nature of the narcotics scourge and of the need for a constant improvement of the means and the cooperation already established to confront it.

The Secretary-General's introductory message, delivered here by Mr. Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), and the particularly eloquent reports that have been presented paint a striking picture of the global status of drug abuse and inform us that the transnational production-line of death and decay has earned the drug traffickers at least $500 billion in 1992 alone.

Just as the disease has often been diagnosed, so too have appropriate remedies been clearly identified and prescribed. Among them, of course, figures the broadest and most sustained international cooperation aimed at promoting prevention and at achieving stronger control and suppression through the coordination of national efforts and the establishment of mutual assistance among nations. In that context the activities of the UNDCP over the past two years are to be commended. The UNDCP has quickly become an operational, non-bureaucratic instrument whose means and resources must be strengthened. The United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, whose meetings, which assemble qualified professionals in all fields, are oriented towards joint action and a useful exchange of experiences, has become a promising arena for imaginative and trust-based international cooperation.

The African continent, on which the combined ravages of man and nature have inflicted serious economic and social instability, has been singled out by the drug traffickers as a new and ideal launching pad for a large-scale expansion of their criminal activities. In less than a decade local drug consumption in Africa has greatly increased, and the continent has become an important

centre for drug transit to neighbouring high-consumption areas.

Obviously, Africa must be given an important place on the list of UNDCP priorities, and its currently modest and inadequate share of budgetary appropriations must be radically augmented to a level that properly reflects a visible commitment by the international community to Africa in a struggle that requires strong and consistent support. The existence of weak links in the chain of international cooperation to combat illicit drug trafficking would be too deleterious to effective joint action for us not to give high priority to Africa's resource needs.

Because of its crucial geographical position and the extent of its land and sea borders, Algeria has over the years become a significant drug-transit country. A July 1993 publication of the Geopolitical Drug Observatory for the first time lists Algeria among the transit and/or consumer countries.

In fact, the responsible Algerian authorities, who are most keenly concerned at the increase in drug transit through the country, have noted, as a result of the seizures they have effected, that that transit involves not only cannabis but hard drugs as well, drugs that were unknown in Algeria until recently. The Algerian people, whose entrenched values have long shielded them from large-scale consumption, have become residual but not inconsiderable recipients of drugs in transit to the major markets of the northern hemisphere, a transit that has, by contamination, helped to create a market of local consumers.

Given that situation, the Algerian authorities have taken clear-sighted and determined steps to deal with the situation by establishing a base of action that includes public health and large-scale educational campaigns as well as the creation of legislative tools and intersectorial coordination. Multifaceted activities are being carried out in the framework of existing health-care and health-protection legislation. A National Commission to combat drugs and drug addiction has been created. A national steering programme to combat drugs is at an advanced stage of preparation. A national prevention campaign aimed primarily at young people has been launched and will continue throughout this year. At the same time, greater resources have been allocated to control at borders, ports and airports and such control has been made more rigorous and effective.

On the regional and international levels Algeria is playing an active role in specialized coordination with the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) in Africa and with other Arab and international organs. A joint programme, which is about to end, has been successfully carried out with UNDCP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and has opened wider and more ambitious prospects for an increased UNDCP effort to provide meaningful support to Algeria's determined endeavours to combat the scourge of drugs, both for its own sake and that of others.

In addressing the problem of illicit-drug trafficking at this high level, the General Assembly's intent has not been merely to echo, albeit with greater conviction and stronger resolve, a profession of faith that has already been voiced by the international community, so sorely tried by the persistent scourge. Nor should the Assembly be content with using this debate as an attempt to exorcise a devil that is destroying the health of countless human beings as it is undermining the values of the societies of which the plague's victims are a part.

What this "centre for harmonizing the actions of nations" in pursuit of the common purposes articulated in the Charter should do is to expand the approach to international drug-control problems by making the requirements for combating illicit drug trafficking an integral part of the intrinsic components of human security. From this standpoint, the struggle against illicit drug trafficking will undoubtedly require a sufficient level of resources, but it will also and above all require an egalitarian concept of the individual's dignity and worth and the resolve to work for that concept at all times and in all circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: I call on Her Excellency Mrs. Grete Knudsen, Minister for Social Affairs of Norway.

Mrs. KNUDSEN (Norway): With your permission, Sir, I will divide my statement into two separate parts. First, I shall speak on behalf of the Norwegian Government, and then I shall make a brief statement on behalf of the Pompidou Group.

The overall aim of the Norwegian illicit-drugs policy is a society free from illicit drugs. Action against both the supply of and demand for illicit drugs has been accorded a high priority by the Norwegian Government ever since drug abuse emerged as a new social problem among young people in the mid-1960s.

Restrictive legal measures range from severe maximum sentences for illicit trafficking to penalties for the possession of illicit drugs for personal use and actual

consumption as well. At the same time, Norway tries to balance law-enforcement measures with measures to reduce demand.

In line with the recommendations set forth in the United Nations Global Programme of Action, Norwegian policy is - as I see it - comprehensive, multisectorial and multidisciplinary. It comprises three major strategies:

First, a wide range of preventive measures are promoted in order to strengthen the social networks in local communities, where people live and children are brought up. There are, however, clear limits to what can be achieved through public efforts and funding. Much emphasis, therefore, is put on encouraging local community members to contribute towards making our communities drug-free and better places to live in.

Secondly, we realize the need for maintaining a strong public commitment and adequate public services at the local, regional and state levels. We are thus aiming at maintaining a net of effective and well-coordinated public services which are able to adapt to the many changing aspects of the drug-abuse phenomenon.

Thirdly, since illicit-drug abuse is indeed an international problem, we regard increased international cooperation to be of vital importance in our fight against the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs. Substantive progress can, in my opinion, be made also in the field of demand reduction through increased systematic evaluation of prevention and treatment programmes, exchange of experiences and systematic training of staff.

Although the problems we are facing may appear to be overwhelming, I wish to make it abundantly clear that my Government is opposed to any tendency toward resignation. We strongly reject therefore any proposal aimed at legalizing the non-medical use of drugs. Norway welcomes the very clear and convincing way in which the International Narcotics Control Board in its report has analysed the consequences of legalization of the non-medical use of drugs. Legalization would be contrary to existing provisions of the international drug-control treaties. I feel convinced that it would at the same time lead to an expansion of demand and that it would have a substantial impact on public health and social well-being.

In a spirit of optimism, Norway will continue to contribute substantially to international cooperation in the field of drug-abuse control. I would like to underline the important role of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in this respect as the focal point for overall international coordination and as a global resource centre. We look with keen interest to the involvement of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan and will consider how we can most efficiently support its implementation.

I come now to the second part of my statement. As current President of the Pompidou Group, I shall express briefly some viewpoints on behalf of the Group.

The Pompidou Group is the Council of Europe's Cooperation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs. It comprises 25 European member States and the Commission of the European Communities.

There are, admittedly, some real differences between drug-abuse patterns and responses in the European countries. We do, however, share a mutual and deep concern at the continuing seriousness of drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and the threat which they pose to society and to the health and well-being of its citizens, most especially young people. Europe is a diverse continent which is in a process of continual change. We welcome the dynamic political, economic and social changes that are taking place, but we are intent on preventing, through more effective collaboration, these changes from leading to a further increase in drug abuse and trafficking.

The Pompidou Group provides at the European level a forum where politicians, professionals and experts meet to discuss how best to improve our understanding of the drug phenomenon, its likely development and the action required in response to it. Its work programme reflects the Group's multidisciplinary nature and approaches. It includes activities in epidemiology in order to improve the data on trends in drug abuse in Europe; activities in demand reduction aiming at translating into practical reality the increased political importance attached to it; and action to combat illicit trafficking with the objective of sharing experience on the legislative approach to drug abuse and on the functioning of the criminal justice system.

A major political priority of the Pompidou Group is to bring the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into participation in the Group's activities, including those not yet members of the Council of Europe, so as to help them prevent the development of major problems related to the large-scale production and trafficking of illegal drugs and money-laundering in the region. We believe that the Group, like the Council of Europe in general, has a vital role to play in advancing dialogue and cooperation with these countries. Acting on an initiative by the European

Council in June 1990, the Pompidou Group therefore convened the first pan-European ministerial conference on cooperation on illicit drug abuse problems in Oslo in May 1991. To review the results and reinforce cooperation throughout Europe, the second ministerial conference will be held in Strasbourg on 4 February 1994. By adopting a future programme of activity, drafted in consultation with, inter alia, UNDCP, and above all by reaffirming and strengthening the political will throughout Europe to combat drugs actively, the Pompidou Group can, we hope, provide a model for regional cooperation in support of the United Nations Global Programme of Action.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Zbigniew M. Halat, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Welfare of Poland.

Mr. HALAT (Poland): Never before in its 50-year history has the United Nations faced so many pressing tasks and formidable challenges in every area of human endeavour. Drug control is manifestly one of them. The control system developed over the past century has so far failed to produce the expected results. Drug abuse and illicit trafficking pose one of the gravest threats to the world's progress, for numerous reasons, including the lack of universal respect for international legal instruments, the uneven application of control regimes and unstable political and economic conditions in different parts of the world.

At the same time, however, these negative phenomena are accompanied by numerous manifestations of the determination and political will of States to give the highest priority to combating this sinister threat. The present debate in the highest organ of the United Nations is one such remarkable manifestation.

Poland is vitally interested in participating in all international actions aimed at limiting and eventually eliminating drug abuse and illicit trafficking. We firmly believe that only the concerted action of all States, regardless of their geographical location or the degree of their exposure to the threats in question, can bring about the expected results. We must therefore appeal to all concerned to strengthen international cooperation and redouble efforts to broaden the areas appropriate for such cooperation.

The United Nations International Drug Control Programme is particularly well equipped to act as a catalyst for cooperative international effort. Established out of the consolidation of the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) secretariat and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, it now ensures effective leadership for all United Nations drug control activities. We offer our full support to the Programme and its policies, which are designed to meet the diverse needs of different regions. We hope that in view of the growing problem of drug abuse and illicit drug traffic in Central and Eastern Europe, multidisciplinary programmes applied to our region will be vigorously pursued.

The system created by international legal instruments, particularly the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, has aimed at establishing a global equilibrium between the demand for and the supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for licit purposes and at preventing their diversion to illicit channels. It is therefore of primary importance to achieve universal adherence to the international drug treaties. So far, the widest control has been effected over narcotic drugs, and consequently their distribution has been well protected from diversion into illicit markets. However, control of poppy plantations, as well as cannabis and coca bush plantations, remains the weakest element of the system. The prompt identification and eradication of illicit cultivation, as well as providing substitute crops, are therefore extremely urgent tasks for the global community.

Because of the diversity of psychotropic substances and their wide applicability, the control system instituted for that group of substances has only begun to have a positive effect. Visible progress in that area can be attributed both to the larger number of States who are now parties to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and to the fact that control levels have been set at a higher ceiling than that provided for by the provisions of that Convention.

Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/15, many countries have already extended the system of import and export authorizations provided for in article 12 of the Convention to cover international trade in substances listed in schedules III and IV of the Convention. Similarly, resolution 1991/44 initiated a process of assessing annual legitimate requirements for psychotropic substances. Once the foregoing provisions receive enough international support, it will also prove possible to reduce diversion of psychotropic substances to illicit traffic, particularly to developing countries.

The creation of monitoring and control systems to prevent diversion of precursors and chemical substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic and

psychotropic substances would be another important step in the process of establishing effective international control. Following the recommendations of the Chemical Action Task Force and the guidelines issued by INCB, practical mechanisms have already been established in many countries. Since most Governments have entrusted such functions to agencies responsible for control of narcotic and psychotropic substances, strengthening those agencies in terms of personnel and financial resources has assumed special importance.

The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances introduced an array of new international control instruments to combat illicit traffic by establishing principles of penal responsibility, confiscation of proceeds derived from illicit traffic and new forms of counteracting illicit traffic by sea. Although the full effects of those actions will not be seen for some years to come, we have to begin now to think of ways to strengthen the effectiveness of the law-enforcement agencies and to utilize the existing structures, including Interpol, the Customs Cooperation Council, the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) meetings and bilateral and regional agreements, for better information exchange and more efficient cooperation in combating illicit traffic. Judicial organs will have new tasks not only because of the need for action on mutual legal assistance in investigations and prosecution proceedings, but also because of the complexity of the factual and legal material of the cases to be examined. Special attention must be given to the training of personnel at all levels.

Control of the drug supply and the suppression of illicit traffic have for many years been subjects of global concern. The third element of the triad, demand reduction, seems to have received the least international attention. Our knowledge of the epidemiological situation of drug addicts and our response to their growing numbers are still inadequate. We therefore attach major importance to developing national systems of data collection in line with the International Drug Abuse Assessment System. The elaboration of any viable system of drug abuse prevention and assistance to addicts is possible only on the basis of credible indices which accurately determine the scope of the problem.

The processes of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation differ greatly in individual countries. There is no one effective system for approaching the problem of addicts. Yet in this diversity of approaches, adapted to the specific conditions of different countries, certain experiences are worth sharing. We therefore offer our support to the UNDCP initiative on the collection of information on effective national action in that regard. The data thus collected should be the backbone of the United Nations strategy on demand reduction.

The United Nations has decided to devote the last decade of the current century to action against drug abuse. The decisions to be taken by the international community in its struggle against drugs are therefore our responsibility. Poland, too, wishes to contribute to the current debate its own experience and achievements during our country's demanding time of political and economic transformations. On 15 April of this year, President Lech Walesa signed the ratification document of the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. The ratification process of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has been considerably advanced; the new Parliament should soon adopt the ratification law on the Convention. Consequently, Poland will have become party to all legal instruments currently binding the international community. This implies that the system of national regulation will be fully adapted to international standards.

Poland has been the first Central or Eastern European country that has had to face problems of drug addiction. In the course of the last several years, we have developed an ambitious programme of treatment, rehabilitation and prevention of social pathologies. This has made it possible to slow down the growing trends of drug addiction in the late 1980s. As of late, health promotion, as an element of early prevention, has been an important factor in the process. Youth leaders have a special role to play in encouraging lifestyles free from substance abuse. To this end, a Federation of Youth Leaders for Health Promotion has been established. Their functions consist of training health promoters and training young people to adopt healthy lifestyles. Poland's national programme on drug abuse prevention is also supported by various professions, including medical doctors, psychologists and social welfare staff. We are ready to offer our experience to all interested countries and organizations.

Drug addiction in Poland has developed on the basis of raw materials available in the country, primarily poppy straw from which heroine is obtained. In order to prevent its use for illegal production of drugs, a new variety of opium poppy has been developed. It contains ten times lower morphine content than the varieties used before. By the decision of the Ministry of Agriculture, only the new variety has been cultivated in Poland for the last two years to obtain poppy seeds. We would wish to encourage other

countries to consider substituting new varieties for currently cultivated poppy plants.

In recent years Poland has strengthened its cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. A special International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) mission visited Poland last December. A month ago, we jointly held with the INCB a Regional Training Seminar for Drug Control Administrators from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as from the Commonwealth of Independent States. The participants in the Seminar adopted a series of recommendations, including a proposal that Warsaw become the venue of regular training meetings of the kind for countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan.

Ms. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) (*interpretation from Russian*): Today I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries that participate in the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia and Moldova.

There is no country in the world that has not been affected to some extent by the problem of drug addiction. The summary of the report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 1992, which we have before us, emphasizes in this context that

> "the world-wide drug abuse and trafficking situation remained grim in 1992. Drugs have become available for illicit purposes virtually everywhere in the world." (*E/1993/45, para. 2*).

Drug trafficking is one of the most dangerous forms of organized crime. The report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on its thirty-sixth session states, *inter alia*, that

> "drug-trafficking criminal groups were becoming more professionally organized, ruthless, well-financed, difficult to penetrate and prone to violence." (*E/1993/29, para. 22*)

The discussion in the Commission revealed a close link between drug trafficking and terrorist groups and the illegal arms trade. Armed conflicts and political instability in various countries and regions create favourable conditions for illicit drug trafficking. There is, of course, a reverse process as well: illicit drug trafficking undermines law and order, seriously impedes economic development, destabilizes the situation and hampers democratic transformation and the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms.

It seems that no country working alone is able to reverse this negative trend of growing drug threat. To achieve tangible results in this fight against "the global epidemic", all members of the international community have to join their efforts.

The United Nations, a focal point of the international efforts to fight drug trafficking, has to make a unique contribution in this regard. The Organization has accumulated an impressive number of ideas and initiatives in this area that should be implemented effectively at the national level. We think that these efforts would be greatly facilitated by the fundamental restructuring of United Nations activities in this area. This was seen, *inter alia*, in the establishment of its drug control Programme.

The management of the Programme has done much to turn it into an effective coordination centre dealing with all drug control issues both within and outside the framework of the United Nations. Supporting in general the steps taken by the management of the Programme, we expect that they will continue to be aimed at making United Nations activities in this area more action-oriented and better coordinated. We hope that the Programme will continue to assist the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia and Moldova in establishing and maintaining in their territories an effective drug control system.

We think that the Programme should base its activities on the concept of mobility; in other words, it should be able to respond promptly and adequately to new challenges to the international community caused by the global drug situation.

It is also important to coordinate efforts with other United Nations bodies, first of all in combating crime, in order to avoid overlapping and to achieve tangible results, making use of concerted efforts within the United Nations system.

A strengthened universal international system to control narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, based on fundamental international drug control instruments, is an important element of the Programme. We share the concern of the International Narcotics Control Board over the fact that 52 States are still not parties to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. It is hard to

disagree with the conclusion in its report that there is an urgent need for the newly independent States of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union to be integrated into the international drug control system. As the summary of the report states:

> "Although the drug abuse situation in the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe is not yet on a par with that of Western Europe, the transitional phase of these countries may provide traffickers with legal loopholes they can take advantage of, which could have an adverse impact on the whole of Europe." (*E/1993/45, para. 31*)

The argument concerning the need to ensure universal participation, first by integrating the newly independent States into the Treaty framework, fully applies to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The need to increase these efforts was emphasized at the recent session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Over the years, the Commission has become a highly professional forum for drug control interaction of States under the auspices of the United Nations. Its last session was no exception. The Commission, taking into account the opinion of the International Narcotics Control Board, strongly rejected proposals to legalize the non-medical use of drugs. It stressed in its report that:

> "Such initiatives would undermine the international drug control system and jeopardize the implementation of the existing international drug control treaties, which constitute the cornerstone of that system." (*E/1993/29, para. 44*)

It is satisfying that this decisive stand by the Commission was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council. The Commission's position regarding the inadmissibility of decriminalizing the abuse of drugs and psychotropic substances and its negative attitude towards the elimination of strict State control over the use of drugs are also commendable.

Taking into the account the results of the discussion in the Commission, I would like to draw attention to some of the proposals made at its session with a view to improving further the international system of control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In our opinion, we should consider in this context the idea of drafting a new unified convention merging all existing multilateral instruments in this field, which would allow us to eliminate "double entry book-keeping" in issues of control and create favourable conditions for improving the effectiveness of the activities of the International Narcotics Control Board and the international drug control system in general.

As concerns making the fight against international drug trafficking and other related criminal activities more effective, we welcome the proposal in the report transmitted by the Secretary-General

> "for the United Nations system to expedite consideration of the possibilities and options for judicial action at the international level". (*A/48/178, para. 37*)

In this context, the International Law Commission could be called upon to expedite its work on the establishment of an international criminal court which, acting on behalf of the international community as a whole, could become an instrument to ensure the punishment of drug traffickers.

The States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as Georgia and Moldova, attach great importance to the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (1991-2000), proclaimed on the initiative of Ukraine. It is important to ensure that the opportunities provided by the Decade be used in the most efficient way by promoting the wider knowledge and participation of Governments, specialized agencies of the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations and public figures. The Decade provides a good opportunity for activities at the international, regional and national levels, primarily through preventing this scourge by taking appropriate educational measures and promoting a healthy way of life, which would bar drugs from schools and the workplace.

The drug control efforts of the United Nations will produce the necessary results only if they are reinforced by concrete steps at the regional, bilateral and national levels. The States on whose behalf I am speaking today are becoming actively involved in cooperation, through the Council of Europe, to fight drug addiction. It is our serious intention in Asia to participate in the multilateral interaction on these issues, including interaction under the auspices of the United Nations. Movement in that direction has already begun.

Efforts have been initiated to establish a drug control system within the Commonwealth of Independent States. Multilateral agreements concerning the fight against illicit drug trafficking and legal assistance in criminal cases have been concluded. The law-enforcement agencies have been taking measures against syndicates of traffickers. We

count on the continued cooperation of the United Nations and its bodies on these issues.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Turkey.

Mr. BATU (Turkey): Due to the lateness of the hour, I shall present a shorter version of my prepared statement. The full text will be available to all delegations.

Despite drug Conventions, the Global Programme of Action and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, drug abuse and illicit trafficking continue to be a global threat, often linked to terrorist activities and illegal arms trading, and call for a vigorous and concerted international response. Such a response has to be directed equally to all aspects of the problem: supply, demand, illicit trafficking, rehabilitation of users and money laundering.

The creation of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) has enabled the Organization to play a central role in the struggle against drugs. However, to fulfil its mandate properly, UNDCP needs a solid and viable financial base. Considering that the annual monetary turnover of drug traffickers is $500 billion, while UNDCP has received only $13.8 million from the regular budget for the 1992-1993 biennium and $186.6 million from extrabudgetary contributions, the availability of funds remains the most important factor. Therefore, United Nations activities in drug abuse control should be granted a greater share of the regular budget and more generous voluntary contributions.

Another concern is that 90 per cent of the voluntary contributions are made by four major donors and are generally earmarked for certain projects. This prevents UNDCP from being flexible in the optimal utilization of its funds. We urge the major donors to facilitate the work of UNDCP by donating funds to be used for general purposes.

UNDCP, which was established in 1991 by General Assembly resolution 45/179, is now headed by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, who can allocate only a part of his time to this very important and challenging task. While the Secretary-General is looking into ways of reforming the United Nations and of trying to make it more efficient in order to respond to the needs of our times, we urge him to restructure UNDCP accordingly.

We also urge UNDCP to concentrate more on areas that the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), as an independent body of experts, identifies as problematic, and be more internationally oriented rather than major-donor-oriented.

Turkey, which has made substantial economic, financial and social sacrifices and is still the subject of illicit drug trafficking, faces difficulties in cooperating with UNDCP in the prevailing circumstances. We believe that UNDCP should adopt more transparent mechanisms in the preparation of projects and programmes - in response to the demands of the policy-making organs - and should cooperate intensively with donors and with countries facing drug abuse and trafficking. We also request UNDCP to cooperate very closely with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch in Vienna and seek ways of allocating some of its funds for the Branch's activities to prevent organized international crime linked to drug trafficking.

I should now like to touch upon the substantial problems relating to drugs that Turkey has faced and continues to face.

Turkey, as specified in Economic and Social Council resolutions based on subparagraph 3 of the Single Convention's article 24, is a traditional supplier country. It does not itself face a significant drug-abuse problem. However, in 1974, in solidarity with the international community, Turkey stopped the production of opium in view of the risks of diversion into illicit channels and in spite of the heavy financial and economic losses, as well as social problems, that were entailed.

This decision has also burdened Turkey with monitoring the cultivation of unlanced poppy straw as well as the complicated manufacturing and marketing problems of alkaloids. Turkey still suffers in international trade from this switch in the manufacturing process. Turkey should not become the victim of its goodwill and responsible conduct. Thus, we take this occasion to call on the licit importing countries to share this responsibility, to continue to fulfil their obligations towards the traditional supplier countries, and not to consider this subject as a purely commercial matter.

Moreover, as indicated in every INCB report, it is most necessary to maintain a balance between licit demand for opiates and their supply. In this respect, due regard should be given to the special situation and needs of the traditional supplier countries and the provisions of the Economic and Social Council resolutions supporting the traditional supplier countries.

In the same context, we should like to emphasize our support for the INCB's recommendations relating to the convening of periodic meetings between the main producer countries of opiate raw materials and the main importers.

I should also like to emphasize an issue that Turkey has been taking up in international forums for about 10 years now, namely the link between illicit drug trafficking, the illegal traffic in arms and international terrorism; 10 years ago, Turkey initially met with considerable resistance to this notion of a link. However, developments, as we all know, have proved that this phenomenon is even more widespread than we thought.

Turkey is situated along the longest segment of the Balkan route. This presents Turkish law-enforcement authorities with a formidable task in combating heavy transit trafficking. Furthermore, the changed political situation in Eastern Europe and the emergence of new States in the Balkans, Caucasus and Central Asia are heralding increasing variations in the Balkan route's transit and entry points to Western European countries, and are aggravating the existing problems considerably. The latest figures substantiate this unfortunate development.

We request that particular attention should be paid to these new routes and recommend the adoption of new and enforced methods of cooperating with the newly independent countries. My country has already offered to make its facilities available for close cooperation of this kind, and looks forward to the formulation by UNDCP of effective projects entailing such cooperation.

Before concluding, I should like to reiterate my Government's firm commitment to contributing to the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, and its determination to cooperate with all concerned Governments and the United Nations system.

The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken earlier at this meeting, I now call on the Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop MARTINO (Holy See): The phenomenon of drug abuse has been characterized by Pope John Paul II as one of the greatest tragedies plaguing society today. He has described the illegal drug market as a phenomenon of terrifying scope and proportions, not only because of the very high number of lives brought to an end, but also because of the worrisome spread of the moral contagion. Therefore, it is with great interest and concern that the Holy See is following the item at present under consideration, entitled "International drug control".

The spread of the scourge of drugs has reached proportions commensurate with the growing crises and general misery in every region of the world. It is distressing to see the ever-widening groups seeking this escape: victims of famine and insurrection, the urban unemployed, those trying to survive economic restructuring, the homeless, the destitute.

We are also informed that the high-risk groups are no longer restricted to out-of-school youth, street children, rural-to-urban migrants, the urban poor and the socially disaffected. Industrialized society has shattered the social and economic base of communal societies, so indigenous peoples are now resorting to drugs as a solution. Increasingly, the elderly are falling victim to the misuse and overuse of psychotropic substances, as well as overmedication and excessive prescribing, and misuse, of tranquillizers in institutions that care for the elderly.

As unemployment rates have risen, so has the incidence of drug abuse by the unemployed and underemployed. We are witnessing a tragic rise of drug abuse in a group that would already seem to have lost everything: refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons.

It is evident that individuals who are in misery and despair resort to the use of drugs because they feel they have nowhere else to turn. And the drug crisis is not simply a by-product of social ills; the drug market itself is aggravating other volatile social problems: the diversion of arms and explosives, insurrections, terrorist activities and civil wars.

While the root causes of illicit drug use are still being studied and may well vary from one region of the world to another, one can distinguish many factors that contribute to its dramatic increase. In his message to the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Pope John Paul II asserted that

> "Surely a primary one is the breakdown of the family. In addition, there is a steady weakening of traditional ways of life which for generations have passed on cultural values and given meaning to daily existence; there are increasing tensions in human relationships, rising unemployment, subhuman standards of living, fears engendered by the threat of nuclear war and numerous other social factors, not the least of which is a psychological need to escape from the hardships and painful responsibilities of life. But at the root of this evil is the loss of ethical and spiritual values. If it is true that the youth of today

are the greatest consumers of hard drugs, then it is legitimate to ask if this is due to the kind of society in which our young people are being reared."

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his report on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, notes that the Programme calls for the identification of necessary measures to combat drug abuse at the root of the problem, giving special attention to the social causes. The report adds that

"Several States continue to consider that the root causes lie with the individual and are not of social origin". *(A/48/286, para. 22)*

The Church acknowledges the individual's responsibility to reject the unnecessary use of drugs, and the grave culpability of the individual who engages in the illegal production of and trafficking in drugs. However, the Holy See would take issue with any contention that society, including not only Governments but also other societal institutions, has no role to play in overcoming the root causes of this crisis. In this regard, the Church clearly places a responsibility on the political community to ensure the defence of familial security and health, particularly regarding such dangers as drugs.

The United Nations system and individual members of the international community are to be commended for the many programmes being undertaken to address this modern plague. The Holy See appreciates the efforts of all Government leaders and citizens who are truly committed to eradicating the production, sale and misuse of illicit drugs and substances, recognizing that such efforts can and often do involve heroic sacrifices.

Meaningful collaboration in drug-control efforts is to be encouraged among the various agencies within the United Nations, between the United Nations and Member States, and among States themselves. We also applaud initiatives for preventive education in the home, at school and in the workplace. The emphasis this measure is receiving at the international, national and local levels must be continued, and due consideration must be given to the inclusion of instruction concerning moral and ethical values.

Other activities of the United Nations and the international community are also to be commended, in particular those directed at halting the illegal production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; rehabilitation, treatment and social reintegration programmes; and alternative development programmes.

However, many of these efforts may be hindered and indeed wasted unless the international community exercises the will to confront the issues underlying the global drug crisis. The elements of the interrelationship between the tragedy of drugs and the other crises facing the world community have been acknowledged: poverty and the related issues of excessive international debt, the restrictive international trading regime, and lack of resources and of access to markets. Each of us - individually, as States and as a world community - must begin to recognize the human dignity of every individual, and from that perspective obtain the courage to take all necessary action.

In accordance with its moral principles and teachings, the Church itself has inspired and is operating numerous centres throughout the world, striving to prevent drug addiction and to provide drug addicts with treatment and rehabilitation.

In his address to the Sixth International Conference on Drugs and Alcoholism against Life, Pope John Paul II concluded that the phenomena of the drug problem

"cannot be combated, nor can effective action be taken for the healing and recovery of their victims, unless the human values of love and life are first restored - the only values capable, especially if illuminated by religious faith, of giving full meaning to our existence. Society cannot and must not meet with indifference the sense of being an outsider which so often afflicts drug addicts ... . Laws are needed. Facilities are needed. Bold action is required.

"As it is up to the Church, then, to work on a moral and pedagogical level, intervening with great sensitivity in this specific area, so it is up to public institutions to adopt a serious policy aimed at healing situations of personal and social unease".

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.